



May Day 2026

- **All Out to Uphold the Dignity of Labour,
Stop Paying the Rich and Make Canada a Zone for Peace!
Enhance the Role of the Working Class to
Keep the Oligarchs in Check!**

– *Workers' Centre of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist)* –

Origins of May Day

- **140th Anniversary of Strike for Eight-Hour Workday,
Haymarket Massacre and Declaration of May 1
as International Workers' Day**

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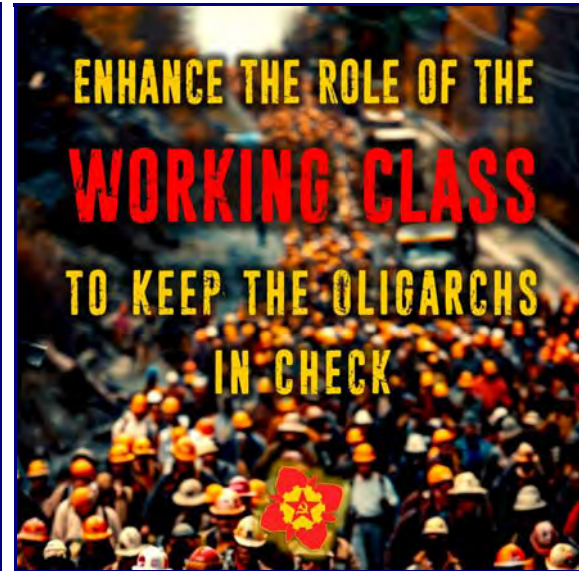
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

On the occasion of May Day, the Workers' Centre of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) sends revolutionary greetings to the workers in Canada and Quebec, the United States and all the countries of the world. It hails the defence of the Cuban people of their revolution, the Resistance Movements of the Palestinian, Lebanese, Iranian, Yemeni and all the peoples in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean who are fighting for their right to be, keeping the

initiative in their own hands, making supreme sacrifices to not permit the U.S. imperialists and their allies to get away with their heinous crimes against humanity.



Right before the eyes of the working people of Canada and Quebec and of the Indigenous Peoples, Métis and Inuit, Prime Minister Mark Carney is amassing bankers and CEOs of the largest corporations in parliament, in his government ministries and unelected advisory committees to restructure the state to enhance the competitiveness of the oligopolies and their cartels and coalitions. This includes not only the oligarchic financial interests and war producers but war alliances like NATO and NORAD and their private contractors as well. To this end, in the name of nation-building, a strong Canada and stability, the cartel parties and Carney's catch-all cartel party government, have taken over the political process to restructure the state in favour of supranational narrow private interests.



A catch-all party, also known as a "big tent" party, prioritizes pragmatism over principle. It seeks to win elections using whatever means it deems necessary over adherence to a political program which humanizes the natural and social environment and prioritizes the well-being of the people. In a catch-all party, power shifts from the members to a professional, top-tier leadership and technical experts. They are called catch-all because their aim is to catch all the interests in society irrespective of their class composition or ideology and on this basis they declare they represent the national interest. Carney's catch-all cartel party government is wrecking the social and natural environment and stepping up war preparations to give themselves unlimited powers to rule by decree. Their counter-revolution uses the positions of power and privilege the oligarchs have usurped to target the working class.

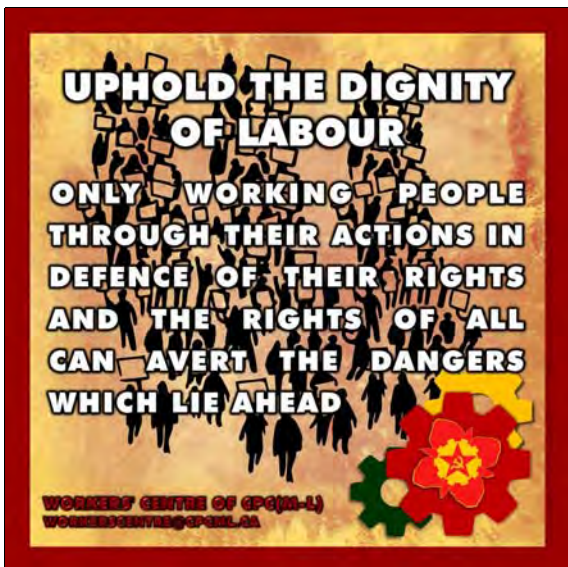
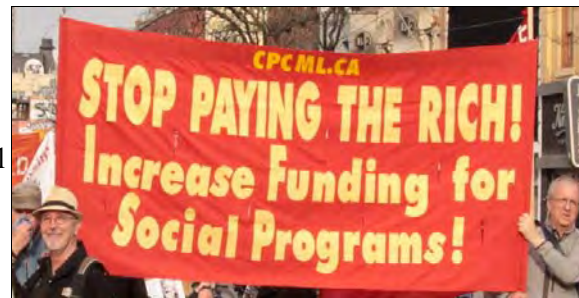
Far from Carney's catch-all cartel government uniting the nation or providing stability, power is more alienated than ever from the people, while police and military measures, intrigue and factional fighting have become the ways in which the state asserts its authority. The catch-all cartel party government unites the factions in appearance only. Factional fighting in fact intensifies because the private interests the factions represent are fighting each against each and each against all to dominate and control the productive forces.



On this occasion, as part of its work for democratic renewal and empowerment, CPC(M-L) vigorously supports all the actions of the workers, small farmers and fishers across the country to lay the claims on the economy and the society they are entitled to make by virtue of being the producers of the wealth the society depends on for its living. It is the battles they are waging which keep the oligarchs in check. The working class has long experience of the pressure to wage only defensive battles without

having its own program. By speaking out in their own name and laying their claims and elaborating what belongs to them by right, they keep the oligarchs in check. They expose the corruption of the oligarchs who are using their positions of power and privilege to deprive the working people of what belongs to them by right on every front of endeavor. Those who, in the name of democracy, stable government and defending the national interest, use positions of privilege and power they have usurped to pursue their own private aims, must be condemned and the means they are using must be defeated as the way to unite in action to open society's path to progress.

The workers are feeling the full weight of the deepening crisis of capitalism and the demand of the capitalists that the only matter of concern for society is their pursuit of maximum profits. This demand is being fully implemented by the federal and provincial governments and the government of Quebec. At a time when the workers are facing massive economic insecurity, unemployment and downward pressure on their wages and working conditions, the agenda of privatization, cutting down on social programs, increasing spending on war preparations, absconding with workers' pension funds to increase investments in private ventures which pay the rich and much more make life even more difficult for the people. In the face of this counter-revolutionary offensive, every day the workers reject the mantra that their role is to contribute to the cause of making Canada more competitive for the corporations and oligopolies by accepting wage concessions and agreeing to restructuring programs which put them into the ranks of the unemployed.



Canadian and Quebec workers who hail from virtually every country in the world, see the tragedies that have emerged as the United Nations Security Council acts not as an instrument for the resolution of conflicts through peaceful means, but as an instrument of U.S. imperialism as well as other big powers, going so far as to portray genocide, extreme violence and impunity as the new normal which the peoples must accept or also be targeted for obliteration.

Not only governments but also the cartel parties, media and all the courtiers of the rich and powerful, are attempting to impose an ideology of defeatism and passivity in the face of the situation, a form of nihilism that nothing can be

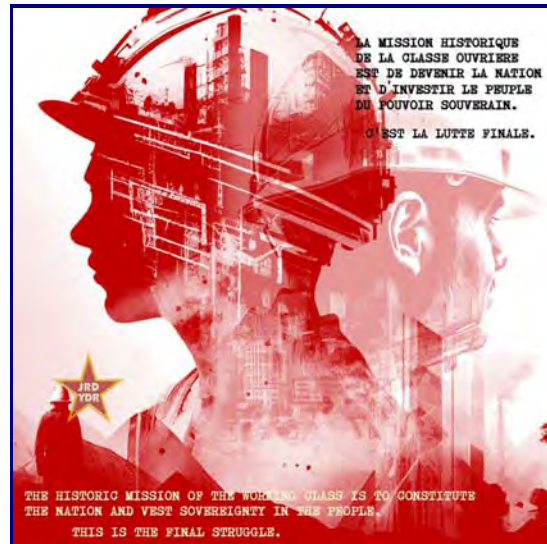
done about the crisis except to accept it and willingly take up its burden by supporting what the oligarchs call the national interest. But the workers are not succumbing to this pressure. They are

fighting, determined to not permit the nation-wrecking and social and environmental destruction. Everyone has a role to play. Everyone is called on to take their place in this mighty fight to humanize the natural and social environment and open society's progress on this basis.

The battles the working class and oppressed peoples are waging are evidence that they are embracing the role of leadership in society as their own responsibility. It is only the working class that can open the path to social progress.

Long Live the Fighting Unity of the Working Class and Peoples of the World!

Workers and Oppressed Peoples of the World, Unite!



Origins of May Day

140th Anniversary of Strike for Eight-Hour Workday, Haymarket Massacre and Declaration of May 1 as International Workers' Day

May Day, the international day of working class unity and struggle, finds its origins in the historic strike of U.S. workers for the eight-hour workday.

The strike started on May 1, 1886. In Chicago, workers' defence organizations organized a general strike and tens of thousands of workers walked off the job. Some 80,000 people marched down Michigan Avenue with the cry, "Eight-hour day with no cut in pay." Police and private security forces from Pinkerton were on hand to suppress the workers, but there was no incident that day. Over the next few days, Chicago workers were joined nationwide by 350,000 workers who went on strike at 1,200 factories, including 45,000 in New York, 32,000 in Cincinnati and thousands more in other cities.

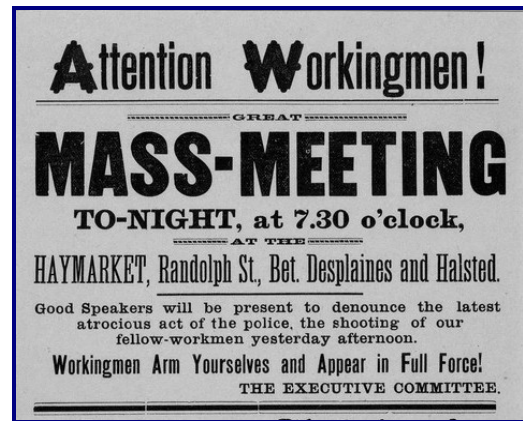
On May 3 in Chicago, striking workers at the McCormick Reaper Works rushed the factory during a shift change and began fighting with non-union workers sent in to break the strike. Police arrived and attacked the striking workers with their clubs and revolvers, wounding several and killing two.

Workers immediately mobilized to condemn and oppose the police violence with an action called for the following day at Chicago's Haymarket Square. The brutal suppression of workers at

Haymarket Square that followed on May 4 has gone down in history as the Haymarket Massacre. It began when an unknown provocateur threw a dynamite bomb at the police. The police then unleashed a hail of bullets at the protestors, killing at least four and wounding hundreds. The bourgeois press launched a full-scale fearmongering campaign against the workers' movement and immigrants.



Chicago demonstration for the 8-hour day in Haymarket Square, Chicago, May 4, 1886



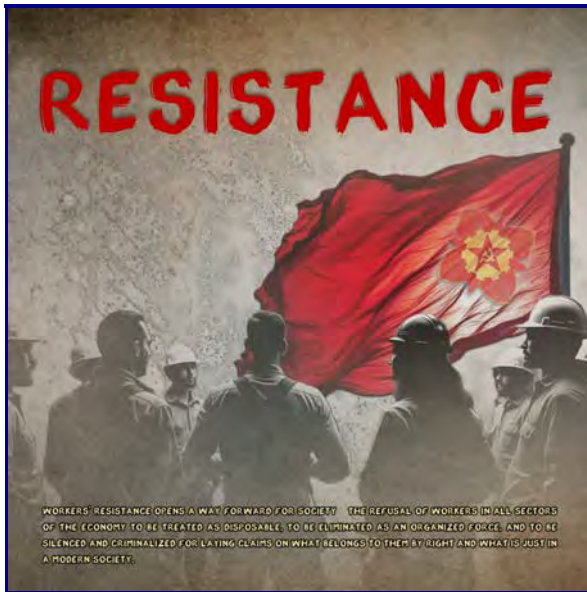
Memorial in Haymarket Square in Chicago (left) and flyer calling for protests the next evening against the massacre (right).

In November 1886, a kangaroo court sentenced eight labour leaders to death for conspiracy related to the bomb thrown at the police and the subsequent "riot" despite the fact that witnesses testified that none of the eight men charged threw the bomb. Nonetheless, four were hanged, one committed suicide and three were later pardoned. No evidence of conspiracy by the accused was produced, and the perpetrator of the bombing was never brought to trial. This year marks the 140th anniversary of these events.

One of the labour leaders murdered by the U.S. state following the Haymarket Massacre was August Spies. In his statement to the court, he declared: "You pronounce upon us the sentence of an appointed vigilance committee, acting as jury, I say, you, the alleged representatives and high priests of 'Law and Order,' are the real and only law breakers, and in this case to the extent of murder. It is well that the people know this. And when I speak of the people I don't mean the few co-conspirators of Grinnell, the noble patricians who thrive upon the misery of the multitudes. These drones may constitute the State, they may control the State, they may have their Grinnells, their Bonfields and other hirelings! No, when I speak of the people I speak of the great mass of human bees, the working people, who unfortunately are not yet conscious of the rascalities that are perpetrated in the 'name of the people,' – in their name." Julius Grinnell was the state's prosecutor and John Bonfield was the police inspector who oversaw the police forces at the Haymarket Massacre.

On November 11, 1887, George Engel, Adolph Fischer, Albert Parsons and August Spies sang the Marseillaise as they stood upon the gallows. In the moment before they were hanged, Spies shouted: "The time will come when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today."

In 1889, during the founding congress of the Second International in Paris, a resolution was passed on the initiative of a U.S. delegate to commemorate the strike of hundreds of thousands of U.S. workers fighting for the eight-hour workday by establishing May 1 as an international day on which to pay tribute to the working class and affirm workers' rights and demands, bringing into being May Day as it is known today.



The eight-hour workday was won through the blood shed by U.S. workers. It inspired workers all across the world to fight for suitable wages and working conditions as a matter of right. With their blood and sacrifice it was the workers who provided rights with a modern definition, just as they are doing today -- that they belong to people by virtue of their being human. By the end of the 1920s, U.S. workers had established political parties and trade unions that had members in the millions, and the Congress of Industrial Organizations came into being. They forced the ruling elite and their state, led by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, to implement major concessions that favoured the workers during the Great Depression.

But right after these concessions were won, the ruling elite with their state started chipping away and attacking them. One of the aims of these attacks was to erase the memory and history of May Day which, after World War II, motivated by anti-communism, was designated "Flag Day," the day to pledge allegiance to the U.S. state, and the first Monday in September was designated Labour Day, whose main aim is to depoliticize the workers. In Canada also, communists were barred from joining unions whose mission became fundamentally anti-communist, while Labour Day became a day to hold family picnics, not a day to express the fighting unity of the working class the world over.

While the struggle of U.S. workers was inspiring people globally, the ruling elite and its ideologues started spreading the lie that there is no working class in the U.S., everybody is middle class, and if you are a worker you are uneducated and a failure. They also created a labour aristocracy, a privileged strata amongst trade union leaders which became part of the apparatus tying the workers

to a political system whose main aim is to disempower the working people so that decision-making remains in the hands of a privileged few who do not have the same living and working conditions as the mass of workers.

In the '60s and '70s the significance of May Day emerged again during the movements against war, for civil rights, women's rights and workers' rights. In 2004, a memorial was erected in Haymarket Square in Chicago to mark the struggles of the working people in the USA. In the last few decades more and more working people in the U.S. have organized protest rallies, teach-ins, concerts and manifestations on May Day. In 2006, it was decisively revived as "Day Without an Immigrant," with militant actions affirming the rights of immigrants and migrant workers and that they are integral to the U.S. working class.

This year across the U.S., on May 1 a national day of action themed "Workers Over Billionaires" is scheduled, featuring rallies, marches and a call for "No Work, No School, No Shopping" to protest economic inequality, corporate influence and anti-immigrant policies. Coordinated by groups like May Day Strong, actions include worker strikes and student walkouts.



May Day in 2026 finds workers and toilers across the globe engaged in a life and death struggle to bring into being a new world which serves them. The people face worsening living standards, genocidal wars, out-of-control climate change, and the threat of nuclear catastrophe. New depths of cultural devastation are depriving people of the ability to think things through and discuss the unfolding reality as it presents itself. Ruling elites across the globe are more concerned about maximizing profits than the lives of billions. They are committing countless crimes against humanity and the earth, in the name of "we the people." It is up to the working class to show what is meant by "the people." History demands that the working class in all countries constitute the nation and vest sovereign decision-making power in the people. The working class must become the makers of history in their own image, with their own aims, which are those of humankind. This is the aim to humanize the natural and social environment, to break with the Old and usher in the New.

